

# Editors' Introduction: The World Alliance for Arts Education: Forging Forward in and Through the Arts

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The significance and impact of the arts on and in education has been well documented globally (Bamford, 2006; Caldwell & Vaughan, 2012; Davis, 2008; Eisner, 2002; Fiske, 1999; Greene, 2001; Pascoe et al., 2005; Wright, 2003); however, there continues to be a disjuncture between what is prioritized in education policy and its perceived benefits, particularly in Western countries. The marginalization of the arts in education has been of concern for some time and appears to be linked to the increasing rise and acceptance of standardized tests to measure student achievement in the current performance-based measurement climate (Adams, 2011; Baguley & Fullarton, 2013; Baker, 2012; Barton, Baguley, & MacDonald, 2013; Ewing, 2010; Morris, 2011). Despite these observations, a rich diversity of arts education practices exists across a range of contexts. It is problematic, therefore, that quality arts education is not consistently valued in systemic and institutional policy and practice, despite its well-documented impact on learning and engagement (Bamford, 2006; Barrett, Everett, & Smigiel, 2012; Burnaford, Aprill, & Weiss, 2009; Eisner, 2002; Ewing, 2010; Fleming, Bresler, & O'Toole, 2015; Fleming, Gibson,

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& Anderson, 2016; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013).

The major arts disciplines also have their own history and body of knowledge which have provided important contributions to arts education, including Music (Colwell & Richardson, 2002; McPherson & Welch, 2012; Schippers, 2010); Visual Arts (Efland, 1990; Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013; Macdonald, 2004); Drama (Bolton, 1984; O'Toole, Stinson, & Moore, 2009; Taylor, 2000); Dance (Hanna, 1999; Preston-Dunlop, 1980; Smith-Autard, 2002); and Media Arts (Dezuanni & Raphael, 2012; Lemish, 2013; Wissler, Haseman, Wallace, & Keane, 2004).

The extensive research which has been undertaken and built upon in the respective arts discipline areas provides important evidence of how learning in the arts “develops creative and imaginative thinkers, as well as encouraging divergent and convergent thinking and multiple solutions to problems” (Jeanneret, 2009, p. 15). The creative and lateral thinking which the arts promotes in addition to their ability to engage people in deep transformative learning (Ewing, 2010) would appear to fulfil a number of priorities being sought by governments and other stakeholders in the education sector (Halme, Lindy, Piirainen, Salminen, & White, 2014; Lavoie, 2009; Pang & Plucker, 2012; Shah, Bosworth, & Panagariya, 2013; Watkins & Verma, 2008; Woronov, 2008).

Therefore, understanding and addressing the inconsistency which often sees the arts marginalized in the education sector has provided the catalyst for a more deliberate strategy to and for arts education advocacy (Bresler & Thompson, 2002; Davis, 2007; Eisner, 2005; Gibson & Anderson, 2008; Gibson & Ewing, 2011; Martin et al., 2013; Zwirn, 2009).

Accordingly, in March 2006, a World Congress on Arts Education was held in Lisbon, Portugal. A major focus of this meeting was on the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) theme of access and equity. As such, the meeting resulted in the UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education (UNESCO, 2006). The development of the Roadmap aimed to provide arts educators, arts practitioners and arts policy advisors with a robust and evidence-based outline of the importance and provision of arts education, not only in schools but also in communities.

The key aims of the Roadmap for Arts Education in relation to arts education are as follows:

1. Uphold the human right to education and cultural participation.
2. Develop individual capabilities.
3. Improve the quality of education.
4. Promote the expression of cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2006, p. 2).

The first aim concerns access to arts experiences for all and acts as a fundamental and sustainable component of high-quality renewal of education generally. Much research explores the importance of the arts across the lifespan (see Section 3 in this handbook, for example) and also how provision for the arts

impacts learning positively. Arts-immersion approaches, for example, have provided evidence of improvement to students' learning outcomes in areas such as literacy (Barton & McKay, 2016; Caldwell & Vaughan, 2014; Chapman, 2015), numeracy (Jeon, Moon, & French, 2011; McCredie, 2013) and science (Ahn, Choi, & Park, 2015; Yilmaztekin & Erden, 2016), which ironically are often the subjects tested through external benchmarking systems or structures (ACARA, 2013; National Centre for Education Statistics, n.d.; OECD, n.d.). The co-option of the arts into the STEM areas (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) resulting in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) has been partly in response to disquiet among educators about an unbalanced approach to education which marginalises areas such as the arts, design and humanities (Quigley & Herro, 2016; Sousa & Pilecki, 2013), yet at the same time views creative and lateral thinking as a commodity in a world seeking innovation (Sheridan, 2014; Wilson, 2010; Wissler et al., 2004).

A holistic approach to education views the arts and sciences as complementary because of the subjective nature of the arts and the objective nature of the sciences, however "a person's brain needs both views in order to make suitable decisions" (Sousa & Pilecki, 2013, p. 10). The arts also include many skills which have been noted as important for surviving and thriving in the twenty-first century, including "creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, self-direction, initiative and collaboration" (Sousa & Pilecki, 2013, p. 15). The ability of the arts to evoke deep, emotional responses is also strongly linked to physical and mental health and the overall quality of life (Karkou, 2010; Preti & Welch, 2011; Schmid, 2005). (See also, for example, Section V: Health, wellbeing and arts education.)

The UNESCO Roadmap affirms, in its second aim, experiences in arts education as the foundation for a balanced creative, cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and social approach for the development of people from birth to old age. As such, programmes need to be planned to address an individual's needs and capacities. In this sense, the arts are inclusive and engaging for all and can address issues such as emotional/behavioural difficulties, exclusion and times of stress or crisis (Felton, Vichie, & Moore, 2016; Karkou & Glasman, 2004). (See, for example, Section III: Arts Education Across the Lifespan.)

Improving the quality of arts education activities and programmes is critical for success. This includes excellence in both the conception and delivery of arts activities and learning experiences in and out of schooling contexts (Barrett et al., 2012; Martin et al., 2013). Arts educators need to agree on high standards that are responsive to local needs and infrastructure, as well as consider cultural contexts. Ongoing professional development and positive partnerships for arts educators, artists and communities are crucial for sustained practice (Burnaford et al., 2009; White, 2009). As White (2009) reveals, "the importance of nurturing and sustaining meaningful human relations in the prevention of ill health tends to be overlooked in an information society where knowledge may be power but not always be equated with wisdom" (p. 3).

Further, the literature highlights the contribution that arts education principles and practices make in resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today's world. Students of the arts benefit from creative and critical thinking through social and cultural practice. The arts are also indicative of supporting and enhancing the promotion of social responsibility, social cohesion, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (Gude, 2009). Eisner (2004) identified important cognitive competencies which the arts develop, including: the perception of relationships between different elements; recognition and attention to nuance; that problems can have a range of solutions; that aims can shift during the process that of creation; decisions can be made through personal judgement; imagination is invaluable; lateral and creative thinking when given parameters is nurtured; and different perspectives are encouraged. These cognitive capacities encourage individuals to "play with ideas, think in flexible ways, take risks and push stereotypes and boundaries" (Ewing, 2010, p. 46).

The Roadmap also, appropriately, acknowledges the fact that the arts—often including craft, dance, drama, film, literature (from picture books to poetry), media arts, music, photography, visual arts and so forth—are identified differently between cultures and are "ever evolving and never exclusive" (UNESCO, 2016, p. 7). It therefore recognizes the need to value arts practice as well as arts education as constantly evolving phenomena with contextualised meanings. Of utmost importance, however, is the appreciation that both the process and the product, the experience and the outcome of arts participation is respected (Bamford, 2006; Davis, 2007; McLennan, 2010).

Another key component of the Roadmap was the emphasis on the importance of research on arts education and knowledge sharing. Quality research on arts learning and teaching, both in and out of schools, is critical for arts advocacy and productive partnerships globally. It also ensures the availability of a strong evidence-base that informs practice (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Sullivan, 2010). (See, for example, Section VI: Arts-based and research-informed arts education.)

The aims of the UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education are important to consider and utilise in our work as arts educators and practitioners. It provides a strong foundation for advocacy, networking and research and has the potential to speak to those making decisions about arts education access and provision. While an important document to refer to, alone, the Roadmap cannot continue the important work needed to sustain quality arts education and access for all. Therefore, the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) was initiated.

### THE WORLD ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION—WAAE

The World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) was established to bring together the international professional organisations of the arts—International Drama Education Association (IDEA), International Society for Education through Art (InSEA), the International Society for Music Education (ISME)

and the World Dance Association (WDA). An overview of the important events leading up to this historic moment is described by Buck (2013), including the development of the UNESCO Road Map for arts education and the beginning of the WAAE during the 2006 InSEA World Congress in Viseu, Portugal. A major first role of the WAAE was to seek out a development agenda in response to the UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education. This occurred between 2008 and 2009.

Building on from the Roadmap was the enactment of the second UNESCO World Congress on Arts Education (Seoul, South Korea, May 2010). At this event, *The Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education* was constructed. This document called upon:

UNESCO Member States, civil society, professional organizations and communities to recognize its governing goals, to employ the proposed strategies, and to implement the action items in a concerted effort to realize the full potential of high quality arts education to positively renew educational systems, to achieve crucial social and cultural objectives, and ultimately to benefit children, youth and life-long learners of all ages. (Preamble, Seoul Agenda, 2010, p. 2)

The intent was accepted as a policy by UNESCO at the 36th meeting of the UNESCO General Council (October 2011) and as a result the UNESCO International Week for Arts Education, (May annually) was established. Buck (2003) states that “the UNESCO meeting was possibly one of the most pivotal WAAE meetings, as it was here that we collectively spoke to a wider influential audience outside of our WAAE forum” (p. 26).

Another function of the WAAE was to hold an annual Global Summit which supported the work of arts educators, researchers and practitioners that focused on three areas—advocacy, networking and research. A major component of the WAAE Global Summit is strategic planning. The Summit not only encourages delegates work together to solidify the positive and ongoing network already in existence between arts educators and practitioners but also strategically develops ways in which to enhance and improve these practices. This focus aligns closely with the Memorandum of Alliance (MoA), signed at the Fourth World Arts Education Summit, held at the University of Rovaniemi, Finland, from 7–9 November 2012, which charges the WAAE:

To utilise the strength and knowledge within trans-disciplinary, trans-national and trans-cultural arts education associations to the benefit of arts education in the twenty-first century. WAAE will advocate for arts education at strategic political forums and levels, providing expert advice to pertinent key policy and decision makers such as UNESCO and WHO while concomitantly seeking, consulting on and distributing policy through respective networks. (Buck, 2013, p. 23)

The importance of being politically aware and utilizing this information to affect policy is a critical component of the WAAE (see, for example, Section I: Contextualising arts education globally and locally).

A number of key events have been held to date including the:

- 2007 WAAE World Creativity Summit hosted by IDEA (Hong Kong)
- 2008 World Creativity Summit hosted by InSEA (Taipei, Taiwan)
- 2009 World Forum hosted by IDEA (Newcastle, UK)
- 2012 World Summit on Arts Education Polylogue I hosted by the UNESCO Arts in Education Observatory for Research in local cultures and creativity in Education (Hong Kong)
- 2012 WAAE Summit hosted by University of Lapland (Rovaniemi, Finland)
- 2013 World Summit on Arts Education Polylogue II hosted by UNESCO Chair for Arts Education, University Erlangen-Nuremberg (Wildbad Kreuth, Germany)
- 2014 World Alliance for Arts Education Global Summit hosted by Griffith University (Brisbane, Australia)

The 2014 WAAE Global Summit, held in Brisbane, Australia, attracted key international arts advocates, educators and arts practitioners, including Professor Emeritus Tom Barone, who paid a special tribute to Elliot Eisner, a long-time friend and colleague. At this summit, a range of presentations, including performances, constituted the three-day program. A key feature on each day was the strategic planning around five focused projects. These included:

- Project 1 on the WAAE governance, focused on the financial sustainability and management of WAAE as an organisation.
- Project 2 focused on the ways in which arts education can link with the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development priorities, including the UNESCO ESD Summit in Nagoya, 10–12 November 2014.
- Project 3 investigated international collaborations through the completion of a database of existing arts educators, arts practitioners and arts education organisations.
- Project 4 focussed on the establishment of an online WAAE international research base, including a journal, for arts educators, researchers and practitioners.
- Project 5 explored new pedagogy (learning, teaching, curriculum) in institutionalised and community settings particularly informed by developing countries within Africa, Asia, the Pacific and South America.

Subsequently, this handbook draws from the strategic focus of this latest summit, including factors that were identified as either enabling or inhibiting the provision of quality arts education and access to this across the globe.

## FACTORS ENABLING AND INHIBITING QUALITY ARTS EDUCATION GLOBALLY

A strong message within this handbook is the need for arts educators and arts practitioners to acknowledge positive prospects for arts education in different ways than ever before. While there are many concerns that have inhibited, and are continuing to inhibit, quality arts education, many practitioners have found opportunities or potential for these inhibitors to be viewed differently or perceived rather, as enablers. The following discourse posits a number of these perceptions related to common themes identified in the literature, from personal experience, and across this handbook.

1. Decrease in the provision of arts education opportunities in educational institutions —*finding alternate ways to offer arts experiences.*

The marginalization of the arts in contexts such as schools and higher education facilities is repeatedly reported in the literature (Adams, 2011; Bamford, 2006; Barton et al., 2013; Cutcher, 2014; Gibson & Anderson, 2008; Zwirn, 2009). Equally prevalent in the literature are ways in which people are aiming to ‘unsettle’ this diminution of time. For example, arts educators are sharing their knowledge and craft, with those that may not have had quality arts education and training, through arts-immersion approaches. Similarly, more arts experiences and opportunities are being offered outside the school context within communities—strengthening culturally and socially cohesive approaches to arts education practices (Fondevilla & Iwata, 2016; Huss, Kaufman, Avgar, & Shuker, 2015; Styhre & Eriksson, 2008).

There is also evidence that arts experiences, both in and out of educational institutions, have positive impacts on students’ academic achievements as well as their health and well-being. These projects and methods will be increasingly important as more and more pressures are placed upon students in today’s world through the proliferation of high stakes testing and a more competitive market for employment, as well as the need for expanding global and transnational skills and knowledge such as design-thinking and creativity (Grodach, 2011; Summo, Voisin, & Téllez-Méndez, 2016; Wilson, 2010).

Finding new and magnified opportunities for arts experiences has the potential to increase the number of people feeling the profound impact of arts education encounters (Caldwell & Vaughan, 2012; Eisner, 2005; Fowler, 1996; Greene, 1991). **This in turn is likely to ‘educate’ more individuals to recognise the benefit of arts education and therefore increase the provision of arts education once again in institutional settings.**

2. Arts education and educators are not necessarily keeping up-to-date with new technologies that are rapidly increasing—*Recognising both contemporary and traditional practices in arts education, learning and teaching*



The exponential increase in technologies globally has immeasurably altered the ways in which artists and arts educators conduct their work. Technologies, including social media and compositional platforms such as software programs, are indeed an exciting addition to practice, learning and teaching. Despite these prolific changes, many have noted the need for arts educators to keep up to date with new and improved technologies (Adkins, Dillon, Brown, Hirche, & Gibbons, 2007; Salavuo, 2008). This can be difficult if teachers have limited knowledge and understanding of such technologies and are not offered regular professional development in order to utilise such technologies in pedagogy productively. A further consideration is the fact that as arts educators, we have an obligation to support and maintain traditional, and in particular, indigenous arts practices across the world. (See, for example, Section IV on Indigenous and Community Practice). We are at risk of losing deep and rich traditions across the artforms. These traditions should not be threatened by new and emerging conventions resulting from expanding technologies and communication platforms but rather enhanced and preserved through such media (Coupaye, 2013; Dyson, Henriks, & Grant, 2006; Haubt, 2013).

We also have the job of challenging dominant social, cultural and political discourses by creating new and contemporary works. Facing us is the increasing growth and development of digital technologies and, therefore, techniques available to us when consuming and creating art (Dezuanni, Dooley, Gattenhof, & Knight, 2015; Garvis & Pendergast, 2010; Sefton-Green, 1999). **It will be important to keep up-to-date with these practices but this can only happen with support from administration and governments in terms of ongoing professional development and learning, and equally important is to utilise these technologies in maintaining and documenting traditional and indigenous practices worldwide.**

3. Access to quality arts education is only available to those who can afford it—*Supporting, acknowledging and documenting participation in a range of diverse and rich practices prevalent across the lifespan and socio-economic contexts is necessary.*

Increasingly, access to quality arts education is only available to those who can afford it. Learning an instrument in Western countries, for example, is expensive. Not only do learners and their families need to purchase an instrument but they also need music, accessories (such as strings or reeds) and lessons. Further, elitism is often associated with learning a classical or 'high art' tradition (Barton, 2004). Aside from this observation, there are, in existence, positive projects that attempt to provide access to marginalised families and communities (Barraket, 2005; Ester & Turner, 2009; Kallio, 2016).

There is a need to document and report on strong quality arts education practices that are in existence across the age groups and across a wide variety



of contexts. Whether or not these are funded or recognised by government agencies, these practices are integral to maintaining strong and rich cultural and social identities. Equally important is for people to share their knowledge and understanding of aesthetic, artistic thinking and design, reaching more individuals and increasing access (Bamford, 2006; Ewing, 2011; Knowles & Cole, 2008). **The more we can spread the word about these opportunities, the more people will have access to them.**

4. There is a dominant method to arts education being implemented in schools—*Drawing more effectively on diverse practices and abilities that exist within the student body and community is vital*

Bridging in and out of school arts experiences is vital for success in arts education. Many have noted dominant discourses that influence curriculum, policy and schooling and these often contribute to the demotion of arts education access and provision despite the proliferation of inclusive intent (Crane, Kawashima, & Kawaksaki, 2002; Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010; Polesel, Dulfer, & Turnbull, 2012).

Whole school approaches that involve community members and groups, as well as students' choice, are important for growth in arts education. Many of our students enter school with certain (or unfortunately limited) arts experiences; therefore, it is crucial that these experiences are further nurtured and developed (Bamford, 2006; Eisner, 2005; Ewing, 2010; Greene, 2001).

Inviting community artists and practitioners into schools through artist-in-residence projects or as part of planning strategies is one such way forward. **Sharing these experiences with the community helps to establish and enhance a school's identity with the wider community.**

## HONOURING THOSE BEFORE US IN FORGING AHEAD

The 2014 WAAE Global Summit held at Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia, was dedicated to the iconic figures Professor Emeritus Sarah Maxine Greene (1917–2014) and Professor Elliot Eisner (1933–2014) due to their inspirational and dedicated interest and passion for the arts and education. Their work provided important consideration to the creation of the summit's theme "Transform: From Inception to Innovation in Arts Education" which focused on traditional, indigenous and contemporary innovations in arts education practice across the globe. Barton (2014), the Executive Director of the WAAE Global Summit, provided important insight into the areas of advocacy, networking and research, which underpinned the three days:

It is indeed an important time globally, for us, as arts educators. With a push for all things measured not free-flowing and natural; and concrete not abstract and unpredictable, we are at risk of excluding much progressive and creative thinking in our world. Many of us in our research have noted a visible decline in the

provision of arts education in schools and higher education institutions, largely in developed countries. The next three days is invaluable for us to work towards solutions to this issue; not for seeking reasons why this decline is happening, but rather pursue ways in which we can openly share the transformative work that we all do. In addition, we must aim to provide more opportunities for people to engage in the arts and experience for themselves such transformation. This will ensure continued and positive arts education practice.

Barton (2014) provided an important rallying cry for those attending the WAAE Global Summit which Greene and Eisner have continued through their legacy of advocacy, network and research in arts and education. The importance of looking back to the past in order to move forward is similar to many traditional beliefs, such as the concept of Sankofa in Ghana. Ford, Watson, and Ford (2014, p. 55) reveal that it means “that we (African people) must know where we have been to know where we are going. The symbol for Sankofa is a bird flying forward but looking back. The bird has an egg in its mouth, which represents the future”. Greene and Eisner both acknowledged the people whose work they had drawn from and built on including Aristotle (384–322 BC), Albert Camus (1913–1960), R. G. Collingwood (1894–1943), Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), John Dewey (1859–1952), Paulo Freire (1921–1997), Howard Gardner (1943–), Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), Susanne Langer (1895–1985), Michael Polanyi (1891–1976), Plato (427–347 BC), Sir Herbert Read (1893–1968), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980), Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961), Frederick W. Taylor (1856–1915), Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862), Maria Montessori (1870–1952), Maya Angelou (1928 - 2014) name a few.

Greene acknowledged the importance of arts-based ways of thinking and knowing and the importance of tradition in her work: “My conception for the future of educational research makes me envisage a greater role for imagination, a greater reliance on metaphorical thinking, and a greater openness to the visions of human possibility opened by our artists in the present and the past” (Suppes, Eisner, Stanley, & Greene, 1998, p. 35). Walker (2014, p. 2) reveals the thorough and rigorous way Eisner approached his teaching, providing readings for his classes that “included not just foundational pieces from education literature, but also works from philosophy, psychology, history, or other disciplines that shed light on the topic”. Both Greene and Eisner’s understanding of the ‘artistry of teaching’ compels arts educators to move beyond their skill in the classroom in order to develop their knowledge, skills and expertise. This will result in knowledge of the ‘big picture’ context they are working in, which will enable them to see where to effect change at local, national and international levels. (See, for example, Section II: Arts Education, Curriculum, Policy and Schooling.) This view supports Gardner’s (2014, p. 2) contention of the role of the educator:

An educator needs to be knowledgeable about three disparate areas of knowledge. The educator needs to understand the nature of the learning process: how the human mind develops, what its pitfalls are, and how it can be fashioned along certain lines. Turning from the learner to the teacher, the educator must understand the nature of pedagogy, the development of the curriculum, and the ways in which learning can be assessed. Finally, an educator needs to be cognizant of the larger forces that affect any educational system beyond home schooling: the political currents, the economic constraints, the processes at work in the broader society, the ambient culture, and the global context.

This international handbook seeks to provide passionate advocates for the arts and education with the opportunity to share their valuable work with the global community and through this process to enlighten, empower and enthuse others with the powerful and transformative effect of the arts on people's lives. We acknowledge those who have gone before us and seek to build on their legacy through the bringing together and sharing of our collective experience.

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